



The City Source

February 2002



You Are Cordially Invited...

On Monday, February 25, 2002, Mayor Carl B. Hutcherson, Jr. and Vice Mayor Stewart B. Hobbs, Jr. will deliver the State of the City Address. The event begins at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers and a reception will follow in the Branch Library. You are invited to attend and hear the Mayor and Vice Mayor speak with the citizens of Lynchburg.

The State of the City Address gives the Mayor an opportunity to bring together the citizens of Lynchburg and talk with them about the events of the past year and the issues that will shape the future. Showing the event live on Cable Channel 6 gives those at home an opportunity to view the event.

In addition to the State of the City address, the Mayor and Vice Mayor will

recognize individuals that have a history of community service. Last year's winners included Rodger Fauber, Rev. Jerry Falwell, Irma Seiferth, Josephine "Jiggie" Holt, William Quillian, Harry Smith, and Gail Jackson. All were cited for their commitment to the betterment of the Lynchburg community and for their countless volunteer hours.

"I enjoy having an opportunity to talk with Lynchburg citizens," said Mayor Hutcherson. "This is a more formal setting than usual, but I think it sets the stage for the coming year. It also gives us an opportunity to recognize those individuals that have made a significant contribution to the well-being of the Lynchburg community."



Real Estate Tax Relief Available

If you meet certain criteria you may be eligible for Real Estate Tax Relief. If after reading the criteria below you believe you may qualify for real estate tax relief, please contact the Commissioner of Revenue at 847-1305 to request an application. You may also stop by the office at 900 Church Street, 1st Floor of City Hall. The deadline for submitting an application is May 1.

If You... Are 65 years of age or older, or permanently and totally disabled.

And... Own and reside in a dwelling in the City of Lynchburg.

You may qualify for real estate tax relief. Call 847-1305, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**When calculating net worth, do not include the assessed value of the home in which you reside or the assessed value of up to one acre of land on which the home is situated.*

And... In 2001 had a combined income of no more than \$27,000.

And... In 2001 had a net worth* of no more than \$60,000.

Brush and Bulk Pickup Service

One Call Does It All For City Residents!

Just call 856-CITY for your brush and bulk pickup requests. Phone calls are taken weekdays from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. After you call and receive a scheduled brush and bulk pickup date, place your brush and bulk items on the curb in front of your residence. Please place items out the day before your scheduled pickup, since the crew might come as early as 7:00 a.m. on your scheduled day.

There are certain things you can do to better prepare your brush and bulk items prior to your scheduled pickup. Please keep the following in mind:

- Keep brush and bulk items separate.
- Brush items include twigs and branches. (excluding piles of leaves)
- Bulk items include furniture, appliances, televisions, etc.
- Place items on the curb in front of your residence. Do not put items near trees or telephone poles.
- Break up brush and bundle it into pieces less than 8 ft. long. Limbs should be no larger than 3 in. diameter.



NOTE: LEAVES ARE NOT eligible for brush and bulk collection. Please call 856-CITY for seasonal leaf pick-up dates.

- Make sure bulk items are not too large. (at least two people should be able to carry the items)
- Freon items such as air conditioners, refrigerators and freezers, are required by law to be kept separate from other bulk items and picked up on Wednesdays ONLY.
- Leaves are only picked up on designated dates and times during the fall season. If you need to dispose of leaves during another time of the year, just bag and tag them and leave them on the curb for scheduled trash pickup days.

Lynchburg in 2020

On December 11, 2001, Lynchburg's City Council endorsed the Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives, and Framework Map—the underlying principles of the new Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan will serve as a guide for decision-making from a land use perspective over the next 20 years.

The complete document will also contain strategies and a Future Land Use Map. Each strategy will be a specific action necessary to implement one of the goals and objectives.

Once the Plan is adopted by City Council and certified by the Planning Commission, several strategies will be chosen for immediate action. Adoption of the Plan is expected in the Spring of 2002.

Several examples of the Plan's goals are:

- Develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan to guide the overall economic growth of Lynchburg, diversify employment, and expand the City's tax base.
- Promote the improvement and revitalization of commercial corridors and districts.
- Conserve, stabilize, and revitalize the City's neighborhoods.
- Provide the citizens of Lynchburg with safe, efficient, and well-planned transportation facilities that enhance economic development and redevelopment opportunities while preserving the integrity and character of the affected neighborhoods, historic districts, downtown, and natural areas.

The Vision stresses that Lynchburg would like to be a city of strong neighborhoods, have a downtown that is the heart of the region, have accessible and attractive commercial corridors and districts, celebrate its history and heritage and have a diverse and vital economy.

The goals and related objectives are organized into 12 elements, including Neighborhoods and Housing, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and Economic Development and Redevelopment, among others.

Copies of the Vision, Goals and Objectives, and Framework Map are available for public review in both the Main Library and the Downtown Branch, as well as on the City's Comprehensive Plan web site. Comments or questions may be directed to Judith Wiegand, the City's Strategic Planner, on the web site or by calling 856-CITY.

Virginia Energy Choice

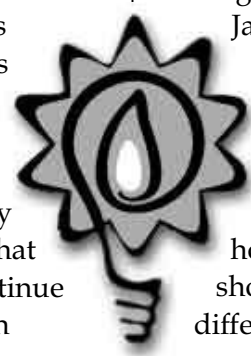
Virginia Energy Choice, a consumer education program sponsored by the State Corporation Commission (SCC), in cooperation with consumer organizations, local utility companies and competitive service providers, is offering information regarding important changes to Virginia consumers' energy bills and the way we purchase electricity and natural gas.

The Commonwealth of Virginia is preparing to give energy customers the opportunity to competitively purchase their electricity or natural gas supply. The choice involves picking the company that has energy to sell. The local utility company that currently provides service will continue to own and operate the distribution system that delivers energy over power lines or pipes connected to homes or businesses. The local distribution company remains responsible for maintenance and restoration of service.

Virginia's competitive energy supply market is expected to develop gradually. Since July 1, 2000, Virginia law has permitted natural gas retail choice to expand to all areas of the state. Retail choice for electricity supply began to roll out on January 1, 2002. Most Virginians

will have the opportunity to shop for electric power by January 1, 2004. If electric or natural gas service is provided by a municipal utility, consumers should contact their local government regarding plans to make energy choice available in that service area.

To help consumers compare offers, energy bills will be changing beginning January 2002. The new bills will include important information regarding how much energy you use per month, how much you pay for the supply and delivery of electricity or natural gas to your home or business and what price you should use to compare offers from different suppliers.



Virginia Energy Choice has developed several resources to help consumers understand the changes to the energy industry, including:

- A web site, www.yesvachoice.com
- A toll-free number, 1-877-YES-2004
- A printed consumer guide
- Fact sheets, price comparison worksheets, questions to ask suppliers
- A grant program for organizations interested in becoming involved in the consumer education effort

Printed materials are available free of charge via the web site and toll-free number.

Frequently Asked Questions About Virginia Energy Choice:

Q: What is Virginia Energy Choice?

It is the Commonwealth's effort to introduce Virginians to the new way in which they may purchase their electricity and natural gas. It is a consumer education program by the State Corporation Commission (SCC) in cooperation with consumer organizations, local utility companies and competitive service providers.

Q: What exactly will consumers choose?

Currently, one local company provides all components of electricity or natural gas service to consumers in a specific geographic area. This company does it all — provides the energy, transmits it and then delivers it into homes or businesses.

With Virginia Energy Choice, consumers will have the opportunity to shop for energy services by choosing a competitive service provider, which is the company that has a supply of electricity or natural gas to sell. This is the company that generates, produces or contracts for the electricity or natural gas for consumers.

Consumers may base their decisions on price, personal preference, environmental concerns, incentives or service conditions that are determined in a competitive market. However, delivery of that energy to homes and businesses will remain the responsibility of the local utility company, also called a local distribution company. The "delivery-only" service is still regulated by the SCC.

Q: Do consumers have to choose a new competitive service provider?

No. Consumers may remain a customer of their current electricity or natural gas utility at currently authorized rates. The goal of the Virginia Energy Choice program is to help consumers make informed decisions that are in their best interest.

Q: How much choice will consumers have?

The SCC currently licenses approximately two dozen competitive service providers. Each supplier decides to which consumers it will market and when to begin such marketing. No one knows exactly how many will participate during the phase-in. Consumers are encouraged to contact suppliers directly to determine whether they are currently making offers in their area of the state.

Q: Will consumers who switch providers save money?

There are no guarantees that consumers will save money. The full benefits to consumers will be determined over time by the forces of supply and demand in a competitive marketplace. It may take several years to realize actual savings. However, consumers can improve their chances of saving money by becoming knowledgeable about their energy usage and shopping around for the offer that is best for their needs.

Q: Will consumers with municipal electric or natural gas service be able to choose?

Consumers who receive electric or natural gas service from a municipal utility should contact their local government regarding any plans to make energy choice available in their service area.

Q: How will Virginia Energy Choice inform consumers?

This is a multi-faceted consumer education program. It includes publication of information materials; advertising; outreach to community-based organizations; a call center (1-877-YES-2004); and a web site (www.yesvachoice.com).

Q: Who is involved in the Virginia Energy Choice awareness program?

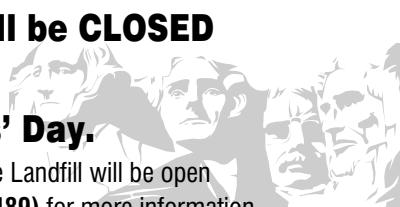
The SCC formed a 15-member consumer education advisory committee to provide input and suggestions for Virginia Energy Choice. Members of the advisory group represent organizations that have an interest in the competitive energy supply market, including consumers, utility companies, small businesses, the Attorney General's office, competitive service providers and community-based organizations.

Additionally, there are local Virginia Energy Choice educators. Their role is to provide factual information to consumers by working with community-based organizations and government agencies.

HOLIDAY CLOSING

All Lynchburg Municipal Offices will be CLOSED
Monday, February 18
in observance of Presidents' Day.

Trash will be collected following the normal schedule. The Landfill will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call Citizens First at **856-CITY (2489)** for more information.



For more information about Lynchburg City services, visit our web site at www.lynchburgva.gov